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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7313
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
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DAKAR PLS PASS ODC, DAO, AND RAO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/15/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GA](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: THE GAMBIA AND IRAN REPORTEDLY TO ESTABLISH
EMBASSIES

REF: BANJUL 34 ET AL (NOTAL)

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH STAFFORD, REASON 1.4 (B AND D)

ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS

11. (C) Well-informed journalistic source told Ambassador February 14 that The Gambia and Iran would soon establish embassies, headed by Ambassadors, in the respective capitals.

Our contact said an Iranian delegation was currently in Banjul to identify a suitable embassy site. He added that the GOTG had already designated its Ambassador to Iran, former Foreign Minister and Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Lamin Kaba Bajo.

COMMENT

12. (C) The two sides' reported decision to establish embassies is not surprising, given the marked expansion of ties in past months, as highlighted by the exchanges of visits by the Iranian and Gambian leaders (reftels). Heretofore, Iran's mission in Dakar has covered The Gambia, while the latter's Embassy in Saudi Arabia has been responsible for Iran. We think it likely that it was the Gambian side that pressed for the establishment of embassies, perhaps arguing that a permanent Iranian diplomatic presence was needed in order to ensure the proper implementation of economic, military, and other cooperation programs that the Iranians have reportedly expressed willingness to undertake here. END COMMENT
STAFFORD